

# Madison water treatment plant work approved

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The Lake County commissioners have unanimously approved a resolution to expand and upgrade the wastewater treatment plant in Madison.

Bids are being advertised and will be opened at 11 a.m. March 28. The project will cost an estimated \$21 million.

"The last upgrade and expansion that had taken place was in 1972," said Albert Saari, sanitary engineer with the Lake County Utilities Department.

The improvements would increase the plant's capacity from 3 million gallons per day to 5 million gallons per day, Saari said at the commissioners meeting Thursday.

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## Approved

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"We've been right on our discharge limits with the plant. We haven't violated it, but we're at that point that if we do not upgrade or expand that possibly could happen," he said.

In order to finance the project, a loan will be taken out through the Ohio Water Development Authority, Saari said.

The loan's rate of 3.05 percent is not set and could change each month depending on a number of factors, but it has held near that rate for a significant amount of time, he said.

To help pay back the loan, the treatment plant capacity fee will increase from \$3.375 to \$5.705 multiplied by the estimated amount of water used by the property according to the EPA, which would match the fee in the Mentor sewer district, Saari said.

For example, a residential house is estimated to use 400

gallons, making the one-time fee \$2,282, Saari said.

The increase would not occur until the project is completed in January 2014, Saari said.

Commissioner Daniel P. Troy said the improvements were important for keeping the county's treatment plants as some of the best in the region.

"We have two wastewater treatment plants that have zero discharge of untreated raw waste going into Lake Erie," Troy said.

"We know there are a lot of wastewater treatment systems in this area of the state that cannot make that claim," he said.

"Certainly I think that the people of Lake County should be proud of the fact that our two wastewater treatment plants do not contribute to any degradation of Lake Erie," Troy said.

"In fact, we have contributed mightily to the improvement of Lake Erie over the years and I think that is just a part of that plan."